

# Crediting Summary Charts for the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs

School Year 2021-22

School food authorities (SFAs) must be able to document the meal pattern contribution of foods and beverages served in the [National School Lunch Program \(NSLP\)](#), [School Breakfast Program \(SBP\)](#), and [Seamless Summer Option \(SSO\)](#) of the NSLP. This publication summarizes the crediting requirements and methods for the five food components of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) NSLP and SBP meal patterns. [Chart 1](#) provides an overview of the crediting requirements for each component. [Charts 2 through 6](#) summarize the specific crediting considerations for each of the five components (milk, meat/meat alternates, vegetables, fruits, and grains).



## Crediting Documentation

SFAs must use appropriate crediting methods and maintain the applicable documentation for commercial products and foods made from scratch. Menu planners should follow the guidance below to ensure that school menus comply with the crediting requirements of the NSLP and SBP meal patterns.

- **Use the Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs (FBG):** The USDA's [FBG](#) determines food yields and crediting information, and the specific contribution of foods toward the meal pattern requirements. It indicates how many servings a specific quantity of food will provide, what quantity of raw product will provide the amount of ready-to-cook food in a recipe, and how much food to buy to provide a specific meal pattern contribution.
- **Obtain a Child Nutrition (CN) label or product formulation statement (PFS) for all commercial processed products:** SFAs must have a CN label or PFS to document the meal pattern contribution of all commercial processed foods. Commercial processed foods without this documentation cannot credit. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resources, [Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labeling Program](#), [Product Formulation Statements](#), and [Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the NSLP and SBP](#). Additional resources are available in the "[Crediting Commercial Processed Products for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#)" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs Programs](#) webpage.
- **Maintain standardized recipes for foods made from scratch:** SFAs must have standardized recipes that document the crediting information for all foods made from scratch. Determine the recipe's meal pattern contribution per serving by: 1) using the FBG to determine the weight or volume of each creditable ingredient in the recipe; and 2) dividing the weight or volume of each creditable ingredient by the number of servings. The FBG's [Recipe Analysis Workbook](#) (RAW) allows menu planners to search for creditable ingredients and calculate a recipe's meal pattern contribution. For more information, visit the "[Crediting Foods Prepared on Site for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#)" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs Programs](#) webpage.

Remember to **round down** all crediting amounts for products and recipes to the nearest minimum creditable amount (refer to [chart 1](#)).

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**Chart 1 – Overview of Crediting Requirements for the Meal Pattern Components**

Criteria	Milk	Meat/Meat Alternates (MMA)	Vegetables	Fruits	Grains
<b>Meal pattern measure</b>	Volume: cups	Weight: ounce equivalents (oz eq)	Volume: cups	Volume: cups	Weight: oz eq
<b>Minimum creditable amount</b>	Full serving: 1 cup	¼ oz eq	⅛ cup	⅛ cup	¼ oz eq
<b>Crediting methods:</b> <i>Round down all crediting amounts for products and recipes to the nearest minimum creditable amount</i>	Credit based on allowable types of milk (refer to <a href="#">chart 2</a> ).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>No added ingredients:</b> Credit based on <i>cooked weight</i>, e.g., 1 ounce of cooked lean meat credits as 1 ounce of MMA. Use the FBG for to determine cooked yields or edible portions.</li> <li><b>Processed foods (contain added ingredients):</b> Credit based on the amount specified in the CN label, PFS, or FBG. <b>Note:</b> <i>The manufacturer's serving weight is not the same as the MMA contribution because processed foods contain non-MMA ingredients.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Credit based on volume (cups) using the yields in the FBG.</li> <li>Credit raw leafy greens as <i>half</i> the volume served.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Credit based on volume (cups) using the yields in the FBG.</li> <li>Credit dried fruit credits as <i>twice</i> the volume served.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Method 1:</b> Use the weight (groups A-G) or volume (groups H-I) in the USDA's Exhibit A chart (refer to <a href="#">Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP</a>).</li> <li><b>Method 2:</b> Determine the weight (grams) of the creditable grains per serving (refer to <a href="#">Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP</a>). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Groups A-F: 1 oz eq = 16 grams of creditable grains</li> <li>Groups H: 1 oz eq = 28 grams of creditable grains</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Documentation for unprocessed products</b>	Not applicable	Use FBG to determine and document food yields and crediting information (or <a href="#">USDA Foods in Schools Product Information Sheets</a> for USDA Foods).			
<b>Documentation for processed products</b>	Not applicable, except for milk in smoothies.	Must have CN label or PFS (or <a href="#">USDA Foods in Schools Product Information Sheets</a> for USDA Foods). CSDE webpage: <a href="#">Crediting Commercial Processed Products for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs</a>			
<b>Documentation for foods made from scratch</b>	Not applicable, except for milk in smoothies.	Must have standardized recipe. CSDE webpage: <a href="#">Crediting Foods Prepared on Site for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs</a>			

# Crediting Summary Charts for the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs

## How to Credit the Meal Pattern Components

Charts 2 through 6 summarize the specific crediting considerations for each of the five components, and include links to resources and websites with additional information.

- [Chart 2](#). Milk Component
- [Chart 3](#). Meat/Meat Alternates Component
- [Chart 4](#). Vegetables Component
- [Chart 5](#). Fruits Component
- [Chart 6](#). Grains Component

For detailed guidance on the meal patterns and crediting requirements, refer to the CSDE's *Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12* and visit the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.



## Crediting Resources

Crediting Commercial Processed Products for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-School-Nutrition-Programs#CommercialProducts>

Crediting Foods Prepared on Site for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-School-Nutrition-Programs#PreparedonSite>

Crediting Guidance for the Meal Pattern Components for School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-School-Nutrition-Programs#CreditingGuidanceMealPatternComponents>

Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA): <https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-for-child-nutrition-programs>

Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-School-Nutrition-Programs/Documents>

Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12 (CSDE): <https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Menu-Planning-Guide-for-School-Meals>

Noncreditable Foods for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/NoncreditableFoodsSNPgradesK-12.pdf>

USDA Foods in Schools Product Information Sheets (USDA): <https://www.fns.usda.gov/usda-fis/usda-foods-product-information-sheets>

# Crediting Summary Charts for the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs

## Chart 2 – How to Credit the Milk Component

The milk component includes only fluid milk. Milk must be pasteurized, meet all state and local requirements, and contain vitamins A and D at levels specified by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). For information on the meal pattern requirements for the milk component, refer to the CSDE's resource, *Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for the Milk Component in School Nutrition Programs*, and section 3 of the CSDE's *Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12*.

Food item	Crediting requirements	Crediting resources
Fluid milk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allowable types of milk include unflavored low-fat (1%) milk, unflavored fat-free milk, and flavored fat-free milk. Flavored low-fat milk is allowed through September 30, 2021. <b>Note:</b> Per USDA memo, <a href="#">COVID-19: Child Nutrition Response #90: Nationwide Waiver to Allow Specific School Meal Pattern Flexibility for School Year 2021-2022</a>, SFAs must request a waiver from the CSDE to serve flavored low-fat milk to grades K-12 from October 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022. For more information, visit the “<a href="#">How To</a>” section of the CSDE's Operating Child Nutrition Programs during COVID-19 Outbreaks webpage.</li> <li>In addition to the USDA requirements, public schools must also meet the state beverage requirements for milk (<a href="#">Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes</a>).</li> <li>Menus must include a variety (at least two different choices) and at least one milk choice must be unflavored. <b>Note:</b> Per USDA memo, <a href="#">COVID-19: Child Nutrition Response #90: Nationwide Waiver to Allow Specific School Meal Pattern Flexibility for School Year 2021-2022</a>, SFAs that cannot serve a variety of milk for school year 2021-22 (through June 30, 2022) must request a waiver from the CSDE. For more information, visit the “<a href="#">How To</a>” section of the CSDE's Operating Child Nutrition Programs during COVID-19 Outbreaks webpage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CSDE handout: <a href="#">Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for the Milk Component in School Nutrition Programs</a></li> </ul>

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Chart 2 – How to Credit the Milk Component

Food item	Crediting requirements	Crediting resources
<b>Milk in fruit/vegetable smoothies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The minimum creditable amount of milk in a smoothie is <math>\frac{1}{4}</math> cup. If a smoothie contains less than the full serving of milk, the meal must include additional milk to provide the full serving. <b>Note:</b> This crediting applies <b>only</b> to milk in smoothies. The minimum creditable amount of the milk component is the full 1-cup serving.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CSDE handout: <a href="#"><i>Crediting Smoothies for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP</i></a></li> </ul>
<b>Milk substitutes for children without a disability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The USDA allows two milk substitutions: 1) nondairy milk substitutes that meet the USDA's nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes; and 2) lactose-free or lactose-reduced milk that meets the required fat content and flavor restrictions.</li> <li>In addition to the USDA requirements, public schools must also meet the state beverage requirements for nondairy milk substitutes (<a href="#">Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes</a>).</li> <li>Juice, water, and other beverages can <b>never</b> substitute for milk in meals for children without a disability.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CSDE handout: <a href="#"><i>Milk Substitutes for Children with Disabilities in School Nutrition Programs</i></a></li> </ul>

For more resources, visit the CSDE's webpage, [Milk Component for Grades K-12](#).

# Crediting Summary Charts for the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs

## Chart 3 – How to Credit the Meat/Meat Alternates Component

The MMA component includes fresh and frozen meats (e.g., lean beef, pork, poultry, fish, and shellfish), processed meats (e.g., chicken nuggets, deli meats, and fish sticks), canned meats (e.g., chicken, tuna, and salmon), and meat alternates such as eggs, cheese, yogurt, nuts and seeds and their butters, beans and peas (legumes), tofu, and tempeh. For information on the meal pattern requirements for the MMA component, refer to the CSDE's [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12](#).

**Note:** The manufacturer's serving weight is **not** the same as the MMA contribution because processed foods contain non-MMA ingredients. SFAs must obtain a CN label or PFS for all commercial processed products (refer to "[Crediting Documentation](#)" in this document).

Food item	1 ounce equivalent of MMA =	Additional crediting requirements and resources
<b>Cheese</b> , e.g., cheddar, mozzarella, provolone, American, and cottage cheese	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 ounce of natural cheese and pasteurized process cheese, e.g., American</li> <li>¼ cup of cottage or ricotta cheese</li> <li>2 ounces of cheese substitute, cheese food substitute, and cheese spread substitute</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cream cheese does not credit.</li> <li>To credit foods that contain cheese (such as macaroni and cheese) requires a CN label or PFS for commercial products, and a recipe for foods made from scratch.</li> </ul>
<b>Commercial combination foods</b> , e.g., pizza and chicken nuggets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Varies by product: Must have a CN label or PFS to document the amount of meat or meat alternate per serving.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CSDE handout: <a href="#">Crediting Commercial Meat/Meat Alternate Products in the NSLP and SBP</a></li> <li>CSDE webpage: <a href="#">Crediting Commercial Processed Products for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs</a></li> </ul>
<b>Commercial meat, poultry, or fish products with added ingredients</b> , e.g., hotdogs, deli meats, and sausages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Varies by product: Must have a CN label or PFS to document the amount of meat or meat alternate per serving.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular bacon does not credit. Some brands of turkey bacon might credit with a PFS.</li> <li>CSDE handout: <a href="#">Crediting Commercial Meat/Meat Alternate Products in the NSLP and SBP</a></li> <li>CSDE webpage: <a href="#">Crediting Commercial Processed Products for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs</a></li> </ul>



# Crediting Summary Charts for the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs

**Chart 3 – How to Credit the Meat/Meat Alternates Component, *continued***

Food item	1 ounce equivalent of MMA =	Additional crediting requirements and resources
<b>Commercial products made with alternate protein products (APPs)</b> , e.g., veggie burgers, meatless chicken nuggets, and soy hotdogs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Varies by product: Must have a CN label, PFS, or a signed letter from a company official attesting that the product meets the USDA's APP requirements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CSDE handout: <a href="#">Requirements for Alternate Protein Products in the NSLP and SBP</a></li> </ul>
<b>Cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish</b> , i.e., without bone, skin, or added ingredients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 ounce: Refer to the FBG for cooked yields of meat, poultry, and fish.</li> </ul>	
<b>Deli meats</b> , e.g., turkey, ham, roast beef, salami, and bologna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Varies by product: Must have a CN label or PFS to document the amount of meat per serving. Many deli meats require several ounces to credit as 1 oz eq of MMA.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CSDE handout: <a href="#">Crediting Deli Meats in the NSLP and SBP</a></li> </ul>
<b>Dried meat, poultry, and seafood products</b> , e.g., jerky and summer sausage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Varies by product: Must have a CN label or PFS to document the amount of meat per serving.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Must evaluate the product's PFS to ensure it meets the following USDA crediting principles: 1) the creditable meat ingredient must match, or have a similar description to, the ingredient listed on the product's label; 2) the creditable meat ingredient must have a similar description to a food item in the FBG; and 3) the creditable amount cannot exceed the finished weight of the product. For example, a 1-ounce serving of beef jerky cannot credit for more than 1 ounce of the MMA component.</li> <li>Ground pork and beef ingredients must include the percent fat because the fat content has a direct correlation to the cooking yield. To credit in Child Nutrition Programs, the fat content of ground beef or ground pork in dried meat products cannot exceed 30 percent.</li> </ul>

# Crediting Summary Charts for the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs

**Chart 3 – How to Credit the Meat/Meat Alternates Component, *continued***

Food item	1 ounce equivalent of MMA =	Additional crediting requirements and resources
<b>Eggs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ½ large</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only whole eggs credit. Liquid egg substitutes are not whole eggs and do not credit. Egg whites served alone do not credit.</li> <li>• To credit foods that contain eggs (such as quiche or frittatas) requires a CN label or PFS for commercial products, and a recipe for foods made from scratch.</li> </ul>
<b>Foods made from scratch</b> , e.g., pizza and macaroni and cheese	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Varies by food: Must have a standardized recipe to document the amount of meat or meat alternate per serving.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CSDE webpage: <a href="#">Crediting Foods Prepared on Site for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs</a></li> </ul>
<b>Legumes (cooked beans and peas)</b> , e.g., kidney beans, black beans, and chickpeas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ¼ cup of cooked legumes.</li> <li>• 1 ounce of roasted legumes, e.g., roasted chickpeas and roasted soybeans (soy nuts).</li> <li>• ¼ cup of cooked 100 percent legume flour pasta, e.g., red lentil flour pasta and chickpea flour pasta.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The liquid served with legumes does not credit, such as the sauce in baked beans.</li> <li>• Legumes may credit as either MMA or vegetables, but not both in the same meal. Refer to <a href="#">chart 4</a> for information on crediting legumes as vegetables.</li> <li>• CSDE handout: <a href="#">Crediting Legumes in the NSLP and SBP</a></li> </ul>
<b>100 percent legume flour pasta products</b> , e.g., chickpea flour pasta and lentil flour pasta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ¼ cup of cooked legume flour pasta.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School menus must offer the legume flour pasta with an additional MMA, such as tofu, cheese, or meat.</li> <li>• Pasta made of 100 percent legumes may credit as either MMA or vegetables, but not both in the same meal. Refer to <a href="#">chart 4</a> for information on crediting legumes as vegetables.</li> </ul>
<b>Nut/seed butters</b> , e.g., peanut butter, almond butter, sunflower seed butter, and soy nut butter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 tablespoons</li> <li>• <b>Note:</b> Use <i>tablespoons</i>, not weight. Measuring 1 ounce by weight does <i>not</i> provide 1 ounce of MMA. The FBG indicates that 1.1 ounces of nut/seed butter credits as 1 ounce of MMA.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider the appropriateness of the serving size for each age group. It may be unreasonable to provide the full serving of a nut or seed butter in one menu item, such as a peanut butter sandwich.</li> <li>• CSDE handout: <a href="#">Crediting Nuts and Seeds in the NSLP and SBP</a></li> </ul>



# Crediting Summary Charts for the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs

Chart 3 – How to Credit the Meat/Meat Alternates Component, *continued*

Food item	1 ounce equivalent of MMA =	Additional crediting requirements and resources
Nuts/seeds, e.g., almonds, peanuts, and sunflower seeds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 ounce</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Lunch:</b> Nuts and seeds cannot credit for more than half of the MMA requirement.</li> <li>CSDE handout: <a href="#">Crediting Nuts and Seeds in the NSLP and SBP</a></li> </ul>
Surimi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3 ounces</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Must have a PFS to credit a surimi product differently.</li> </ul>
Tempeh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 ounce</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Must have a PFS if the product's ingredients contain anything other than soybeans (or other legumes), water, tempeh culture, vinegar, seasonings, and herbs.</li> </ul>
Tofu (commercial)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 ounce</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Three crediting criteria:</b> 1) must be commercially prepared; 2) must be easily recognized as meat substitutes, such as tofu burgers and tofu sausages; and 3) must contain 5 grams of protein in 2.2 ounces.</li> <li>CSDE handout: <a href="#">Crediting Tofu and Tofu Products in the NSLP and SBP</a></li> </ul>
Yogurt or soy yogurt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>½ cup or 4 ounces weight</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cannot exceed 3.83 grams of sugars per ounce.</li> <li>Commercial yogurt <b>products</b> do not credit, e.g., drinkable or squeezable yogurt, frozen yogurt, homemade yogurt, yogurt bars, yogurt-covered fruits and nuts, and yogurt-flavored products.</li> <li>CSDE handout: <a href="#">Crediting Yogurt for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP</a></li> </ul>
For more resources, visit the CSDE's webpage, <a href="#">Meat/Meat Alternates Component for Grades K-12</a> .		

# Crediting Summary Charts for the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs

## Chart 4 – How to Credit the Vegetables Component

The vegetables component includes fresh vegetables, frozen vegetables, canned vegetables, rehydrated dried vegetables, and pasteurized 100 percent full-strength vegetable juice. Lunch menus must include specific weekly quantities of the five vegetable subgroups (dark green, red/orange, legumes, starchy, and “other”). For more information, refer to the CSDE’s resource, *Vegetable Subgroups in the NSLP*. For information on the meal pattern requirements for the vegetables component, refer to the CSDE’s *Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12*.

**Note:** Per USDA memo, [COVID-19: Child Nutrition Response #90: Nationwide Waiver to Allow Specific School Meal Pattern Flexibility for School Year 2021-2022](#), SFAs that cannot serve a variety of vegetables from the vegetable subgroups during school year 2021-22 (through June 30, 2022) must request a waiver from the CSDE. For more information, visit the “[How To](#)” section of the CSDE’s Operating Child Nutrition Programs during COVID-19 Outbreaks webpage.

Food item	Credit based on	Additional crediting requirements and resources
<b>Canned vegetables</b> , e.g., corn, peas, and kidney beans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Served volume and vegetable subgroup, e.g., <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup = <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup of the vegetables component.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Must be drained (serving cannot include packing liquid).</li> <li>Refer to the FBG for yields.</li> </ul>
<b>Commercial vegetable soups</b> , e.g., vegetable soups (such as minestrone and tomato) and legume soups (such as split pea, lentil, and black bean)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yields in FBG:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Vegetable soup:</b> 1 cup = <math>\frac{1}{4}</math> cup of “additional” vegetables.</li> <li><b>Legume soup:</b> 1 cup = <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup of the legumes subgroup.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only certain types of vegetable soups credit. Refer to the FBG. Cream vegetable soups (such as cream of broccoli and cream of mushroom) do not credit.</li> <li>Must have a PFS to credit a commercial soup differently.</li> <li>CSDE handout: <i>Crediting Soup in the NSLP and SBP</i></li> </ul>
<b>Dried vegetables</b> , e.g., potato flakes and dried soup mix	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Varies by product: Must have a PFS to document the rehydrated volume of vegetables per serving.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Credits based on the rehydrated volume (cups) of each vegetable subgroup.</li> <li>Dehydrated vegetables used for seasoning (such as dried parsley and onion flakes) do not credit.</li> </ul>
<b>Fresh vegetables</b> , e.g., broccoli, carrots, and spinach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Served volume and vegetable subgroup.</li> <li>Exception for raw leafy greens: Credit as <i>half</i> the volume served, e.g., <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup = <math>\frac{1}{4}</math> cup of the vegetables component.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refer to the FBG for yields.</li> </ul>
<b>Frozen vegetables</b> , e.g., corn, peas, and green beans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Served volume and vegetable subgroup.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refer to the FBG for yields.</li> </ul>

# Crediting Summary Charts for the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs

Chart 4 – How to Credit the Vegetables Component, *continued*

Food item	Credit based on	Additional crediting requirements and resources
<b>Pureed vegetables</b> , e.g., sweet potatoes, tomato sauce, and butternut squash	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Served volume and vegetable subgroup (must be recognizable).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pureed vegetables do not credit as the vegetables component when they are not recognizable, e.g., pureed carrots in macaroni and cheese.</li> <li>Pureed vegetables in smoothies credit only as juice.</li> <li>CSDE handout: <a href="#"><i>Crediting Smoothies for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP</i></a></li> </ul>
<b>Legumes (cooked beans and peas)</b> , e.g., kidney beans, black beans, and chickpeas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Served volume: Includes cooked legumes, roasted legumes (e.g., roasted chickpeas and soy nuts), and pasta made of 100 percent legume flour pasta (e.g., red lentil flour pasta and chickpea flour pasta).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refer to the FBG for yields.</li> <li>The liquid served with legumes does not credit, such as the sauce in baked beans.</li> <li>Legumes credit as either vegetables or MMA, but not both in the same meal. Refer to <a href="#">chart 3</a> for information on crediting as MMA.</li> <li>CSDE handout: <a href="#"><i>Crediting Legumes in the NSLP and SBP</i></a></li> </ul>

# Crediting Summary Charts for the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs

Chart 4 – How to Credit the Vegetables Component, *continued*

Food item	Credit based on	Additional crediting requirements and resources
<b>Mixed vegetables</b> , e.g., three-bean salad and peas and carrots	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Served volume and vegetable subgroup.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Same subgroup:</b> Combinations from the same subgroup credit toward that vegetable subgroup. For example, a mixture of carrots and sweet potatoes credits as red/orange vegetables because both are from the red/orange subgroup.</li> <li><b>Different subgroups:</b> Combinations that contain <i>at least 1/8 cup each</i> of different subgroups credit toward the appropriate subgroups. For example, a mixture of 1/4 cup of carrots (red/orange) and 1/4 cup of corn and peas (starchy) credits as 1/4 cup of red/orange vegetables and 1/4 cup of starchy vegetables.</li> <li><b>Unknown quantities:</b> If quantities of the different vegetables are unknown, the mixture credits as “additional” vegetables.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refer to the FBG for yields.</li> </ul>
<b>Mixtures of vegetables and fruits</b> , e.g., carrot-raisin salad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May credit toward <i>both</i> the vegetables component and fruits component if the serving contains at least 1/8 cup of recognizable vegetables and at least 1/8 cup of recognizable fruits.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refer to the FBG for yields.</li> </ul>
<b>Pasta products made of 100 percent vegetable flours</b> , e.g., chickpea flour pasta, lentil flour pasta.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Served volume and vegetable subgroup: 1/2 cup of pasta made of 100 percent vegetable flour credits as 1/2 cup of the vegetables component.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pasta products made of vegetable flour with other non-vegetable ingredients require a PFS detailing the volume of vegetable flour per serving.</li> </ul>

# Crediting Summary Charts for the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs

Chart 4 – How to Credit the Vegetables Component, *continued*

Food item	Credit based on	Additional crediting requirements and resources
Vegetable juice, pasteurized full-strength, e.g., tomato juice and mixed vegetable juice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Served volume and vegetable subgroup.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Same subgroup:</b> Blends from the same subgroup credit toward that vegetable subgroup. For example, a full-strength carrot/tomato vegetable juice blend credits toward the red/orange subgroup because both vegetables are from the red/orange vegetable subgroup.</li> <li><b>Different subgroups:</b> Blends containing vegetables from more than one subgroup contribute to the “other” vegetable subgroup. For example, a full-strength vegetable juice blend containing carrots (red/orange), spinach (dark green), tomato (red/orange), and watercress (dark green) credits toward the “other” subgroup.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Juice limit:</b> At breakfast, fruit juice together with vegetable juice cannot exceed half of the weekly fruit offerings. At lunch, vegetable juice cannot exceed half of the weekly vegetable offerings. The juice limit includes all sources of juice, e.g., 100 percent juice, frozen pops made from 100 percent juice, pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies, and juice from canned fruit in 100 percent juice.</li> <li>CSDE handout: <a href="#">Crediting Juice for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP</a></li> </ul>
For more resources, visit the CSDE’s webpage, <a href="#">Vegetables Component for Grades K-12</a> .		

# Crediting Summary Charts for the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs

## Chart 5 – How to Credit the Fruits Component

The fruits component includes fresh fruit; frozen fruit; dried fruit; canned fruit in juice, water, or light syrup; and pasteurized 100 percent full-strength fruit juice. For information on the meal pattern requirements for the fruits component, refer to the CSDE's [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12](#).

Food item	Credits based on	Additional crediting requirements and resources
<b>Canned fruits in juice, water, or syrup</b> , e.g., canned peaches and pineapple tidbits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Served volume, e.g., <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup = <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup of the fruits component.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If the menu planner credits the juice from canned fruit toward the fruits component, it also counts toward the juice limit.</li> <li>Refer to the FBG for yields.</li> <li>CSDE handout: <a href="#">Crediting Juice for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP</a></li> </ul>
<b>Dried fruits</b> , e.g., raisins, apricots, and cherries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Twice the volume served, e.g., <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup = <math>\frac{1}{4}</math> cup of the fruits component.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dried coconut, banana chips, and fruit snacks (e.g., fruit roll-ups and yogurt-covered fruit snacks) do not credit.</li> </ul>
<b>Fresh fruits</b> , e.g., apples, bananas, and pears	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Served volume.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refer to the FBG for yields.</li> <li>Depending on the size, one piece of fresh fruit might not provide the full serving of the fruits component. For example, one clementine credits as <math>\frac{3}{8}</math> cup of the fruits component.</li> </ul>
<b>Frozen fruits</b> , e.g., frozen berries and melon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Served volume.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refer to the FBG for yields.</li> </ul>



# Crediting Summary Charts for the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs

Chart 5 – How to Credit the Fruits Component, *continued*

Food item	Credits based on	Additional crediting requirements and resources
<b>Fruit juice, pasteurized full-strength</b> , e.g., apple juice, orange juice, and grape juice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Served volume.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Juice limit:</b> At breakfast, fruit juice together with vegetable juice cannot exceed half of the weekly fruit offerings. At lunch, fruit juice cannot exceed half of the weekly fruit offerings. The juice limit includes all sources of juice, e.g., 100 percent juice, frozen pops made from 100 percent juice, pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies, and juice from canned fruit in 100 percent juice.</li> <li><b>Juice blends:</b> Fruit and vegetable juice blends credit based on the first ingredient. If the first ingredient is a fruit juice or fruit puree, it credits as the fruits component. If the first ingredient is a vegetable juice or vegetable puree, it credits as the vegetables component.</li> <li>CSDE handout: <a href="#">Crediting Juice for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP</a></li> </ul>
<b>Pureed fruits</b> , e.g., applesauce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Served volume (must be recognizable).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pureed fruits do not credit as the fruits component when they are not recognizable, e.g., using applesauce or prune puree to replace the oil in muffins.</li> <li>Pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies credit only as juice.</li> <li>CSDE handout: <a href="#">Crediting Smoothies for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP</a></li> </ul>

For more resources, visit the CSDE's webpage, [Fruits Component for Grades K-12](#).

# Crediting Summary Charts for the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs

## Chart 6 – How to Credit the Grains Component

The grains component includes breads and bread products (e.g., biscuits, bagels, rolls, tortillas, and muffins), snack products (e.g., crackers, animal crackers, graham crackers, hard pretzels, tortilla chips, and popcorn); cereal grains (e.g., buckwheat, brown rice, bulgur, and quinoa); ready-to-eat (RTE) breakfast cereals; cooked breakfast cereals (e.g., oatmeal); bread products used as an ingredient in another menu item such as combination foods (e.g., breading on fish or poultry and pizza crust in pizza); pasta; and grain-based desserts (e.g., cookies, brownies, cakes, and granola bars). At lunch, grain-based desserts cannot exceed 2 oz eq per week. For information on the meal pattern requirements for the grains component, refer to the CSDE's resources, [Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for the Grains Component in School Nutrition Programs](#) and [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12](#).

Commercial grain products and school recipes must meet the crediting and oz eq requirements for the grains component.

1. **Crediting:** To credit as the grains component, recipes and commercial grain products must be WGR. Check that all grain menu items meet the WGR criteria. For information on identifying WGR foods, refer to the CSDE's guide, [Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the NSLP and SBP Meal Patterns for Grades K-12](#). **Note:** Per USDA memo, [COVID-19: Child Nutrition Response #90: Nationwide Waiver to Allow Specific School Meal Pattern Flexibility for School Year 2021-2022](#), SFAs that cannot meet the WGR requirement during school year 2021-22 (through June 30, 2022) must request a waiver from the CSDE. For more information, visit the "How To" section of the CSDE's Operating Child Nutrition Programs during COVID-19 Outbreaks webpage.
2. **Oz eq:** Determine the oz eq contribution of creditable commercial grain products and recipes using one of the two allowable methods: 1) the required weight (groups A-G) or volume (groups H-I) in the USDA's Exhibit A chart (refer to the CSDE's [Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP](#)); or 2) the creditable grains per serving. For more information on both methods, refer to the CSDE's [Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP](#).

Food item	WGR requirements	1 oz eq =
<b>Breakfast cereals, cooked hot</b> , e.g., oatmeal, cream of wheat, and farina (group H)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Three criteria:</b> 1) The first ingredient (excluding water) is a whole grain; 2) any other creditable grains are enriched; and 3) the combined weight of any noncreditable grains does not exceed the specified limit (6.99 grams per oz eq).</li> <li>• CSDE handout: <a href="#">Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ½ cup cooked or 1 ounce (28 grams) dry</li> </ul>

# Crediting Summary Charts for the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs

Chart 6 – How to Credit the Grains Component, *continued*

Food item	WGR requirements	1 oz eq =
<b>Breakfast cereals, RTE</b> (group I)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Two criteria:</b> 1) The first ingredient must be a whole grain; and 2) the cereal must be fortified. Fortification is not required for 100 whole grain cereals.</li> <li>• CSDE handout: <i>Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 cup of flaked or round cereal</li> <li>• 1¼ cups of puffed cereal</li> <li>• ¼ cup of granola</li> </ul>
<b>Commercial grain products</b> , e.g., breads and bread products (groups A-G)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Three criteria:</b> 1) The first ingredient (excluding water) is a whole grain; 2) any other creditable grains are enriched; and 3) the combined weight of any noncreditable grains does not exceed the specified limit (3.99 grams per oz eq).</li> <li>• Guide: <i>Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the NSLP and SBP Meal Patterns for Grades K-12</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Varies by product: Use method 1 (USDA's Exhibit A chart). <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify the <i>manufacturer's serving weight</i> from the Nutrition Facts label or PFS.</li> <li>2. Determine the <i>required weight for the applicable grain group</i> (A-G). Refer to the CSDE's <i>Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP</i>.</li> <li>3. Divide the <i>manufacturer's serving weight</i> by the <i>required weight for the applicable grain group</i>.</li> </ol> </li> <li>• <b>Use method 2 (creditable grains per serving) and obtain a PFS if any of the following apply:</b> 1) the serving weight is not known; 2) a creditable grain is not the first ingredient, but the product contains more than one creditable grain; 3) the product contains a flour blend; or 4) the product is not listed in Exhibit A. Refer to the CSDE's <i>Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP</i>.</li> </ul>

# Crediting Summary Charts for the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs

Chart 6 – How to Credit the Grains Component, *continued*

Food item	WGR requirements	1 oz eq =
<b>Commercial combination foods</b> , e.g., pizza, breaded chicken nuggets, macaroni and cheese (grain portion from groups A-H)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ingredients listed together (three criteria):</b> 1) The first <i>grain</i> ingredient is a whole grain; 2) any other creditable grains are enriched; and 3) the combined weight of any noncreditable grains does not exceed the specified limit (3.99 grams per oz eq for groups A-G; or 6.99 grams per oz eq for groups H-I).</li> <li>• <b>Grain portion listed separately (three criteria):</b> 1) The first ingredient in the <i>grain portion</i> is a whole grain; 2) any other creditable grains in the <i>grain portion</i> are enriched; and 3) the combined weight of any noncreditable grains in the <i>grain portion</i> does not exceed the specified limit (3.99 grams per oz eq for groups A-G; or 6.99 grams per oz eq for groups H-I).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Varies by product: Must have a CN label or PFS to document the creditable grains per serving.</li> </ul>
<b>Grain foods made from scratch</b> , e.g., breads and bread products (groups A-G)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Three criteria:</b> 1) The combined weight of the whole grains is equal to or more than the combined weight of the enriched grains; 2) any other creditable grains are enriched; and 3) the combined weight of any noncreditable grains does not exceed the specified limit (3.99 grams per oz eq).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Varies by standardized recipe.</li> <li>• <b>Serving weight known:</b> Use method 1 (USDA's Exhibit A chart). <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Determine the <i>required weight for the food's grain group</i> (A-G). Refer to the CSDE's <i>Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP</i>.</li> <li>2. Divide the <i>recipe's serving weight</i> by the <i>required weight for the food's grain group</i>.</li> </ol> </li> <li>• <b>Serving weight not known:</b> Use method 2 (creditable grains per serving) and obtain a PFS. Refer to the CSDE's <i>Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP</i>.</li> <li>• <b>Note:</b> If the recipe does not include the serving weight, conduct a yield study to weigh several cooked portions and determine the average weight per serving. For guidance on yield studies, refer to the CSDE's <i>Yield Study Data Form</i>.</li> </ul>

# Crediting Summary Charts for the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs

Chart 6 – How to Credit the Grains Component, *continued*

Food item	WGR requirements	1 oz eq =
Combination foods made from scratch, e.g., pizza and macaroni and cheese (grain portion from groups A-H)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Three criteria:</b> 1) The combined weight of the whole grains in the <i>grain portion</i> is equal to or more than the combined weight of the enriched grains; 2) any other creditable grains in the <i>grain portion</i> are enriched; and 3) the combined weight of any noncreditable grains does not exceed the specified limit (3.99 grams per oz eq for groups A-G; or 6.99 grams per oz eq for group H).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Varies by standardized recipe.</li> <li><b>Weight (groups A-G) or volume (group H) of <i>grain portion</i> known:</b> Use method 1 (USDA’s Exhibit A chart).               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine the <i>required weight/volume for the grain portion’s grain group</i> (A-H). Refer to <a href="#">Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP</a>.</li> <li>Divide the <i>weight/volume of grain portion</i> by the <i>required weight/volume for the grain portion’s grain group</i>.</li> </ol> </li> <li><b>Weight (groups A-G) or volume (group H) of <i>grain portion</i> not known:</b> Use method 2 (creditable grains per serving) and obtain a PFS. Refer to the CSDE’s <a href="#">Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP</a>.</li> </ul>

For more resources, visit the CSDE’s webpage, [Grains Component for Grades K-12](#).

# Crediting Summary Charts for the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs



For more information, visit the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage, or contact the [school nutrition programs staff](#) in the CSDE's Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841.

This document is available at [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Crediting\\_Summary\\_Charts\\_SNP\\_Grades\\_K-12.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Crediting_Summary_Charts_SNP_Grades_K-12.pdf).

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